

Remarks

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated April 7, 2005. Claims 1-13 remain for consideration.

1. Page 5 is amended, and Figs. 2-4 are amended, to label the mini-CPO outflow as line 40. Therefore, this objection has been obviated.

2. Page 2, lines 19 and 20 state that the blower provides hydrogen to the desulfurizer, and nothing else. The illustration of a mixture of process streams is the stream 24 mixing with the stream 13 in Fig. 1. Withdrawal of this objection to the drawings is therefore requested.

3. The process streams leading from the mini-reformers have been labeled "40" on page 5 and in the figures. Therefore, this objection has been obviated.

4. Correctly marked replacement sheets have been provided, therefore, this requirement has been complied with.

5. Claims 4-13 relate to a "machine".

6,7. Claims 1-6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Fig. 1 and lines 1-21 of page 2, as admitted prior art. The problem is that neither Fig. 1 nor page 2 constitute a patent or printed publication nor indicates public use. Therefore, should a -102 rejection be made in a subsequent action, it should not be made final.

The claims as written, and the only interpretation that could reasonably be given to them in the light of the specification used the term "hydrocarbon feed" to mean non-desulfurized or undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed. The claims have been amended to make it not possible to interpret the claims in any other way. However, since the term "hydrocarbon feed" could only have been reasonably interpreted as meaning "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", adding this clarification to the claims does not change the scope of the claims and should not be deemed to require a further search not to permit making a new rejection final.

In view of the amendments specifying "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", the reexamination and allowance of claims 1-6 and 8 over the prior art recited in this application, on any ground, is hereby requested.

8,9. Claims 9-11 and 13 are rejected as obvious over Fig. 1 and page 2 of this application in view of Louder et al. Claim 9 has been amended to refer to "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", thereby making undeniably explicit that which has been the only reasonable interpretation of claim 9; which is to say that reference to "hydrocarbon feed" meant "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", and which is the only reasonable interpretation to be given to that term in the light of the specification.

Furthermore, the characterization of claim 9 includes an impermissible double inclusion: if element 14 is a small hydrogen generator, then a separate fuel processor cannot use element 14 to represent the reformer. Stated alternatively, if a fuel processor recited in the claim includes element 14 as a reformer, then there is no small hydrogen generator that can be deemed to be element 14. Thus, the rejection would fail with respect to the claims as filed. Furthermore, since the claims now clearly specify "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", claim 9 and its dependent claims are patentable.

The allegation with respect to Louder et al is not understood. The figure clearly has "H2 recycle" flowing from "compression" 13 to the "feed line" at the entrance to element 2 (a heat exchanger).

For the foregoing reasons, and in view of the addition of "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed" by amendment to claim 9, reexamination and allowance of claims 9-11 and 13 is hereby respectfully requested.

10. Claim 7 is rejected as obvious over Fig. 1 and page 2 of this application in view of Hershkowitz et al. In view of the amendment to claim 4 to specify "undesulfurized hydrocarbon feed", reexamination and allowance of claim 7 is requested.

11. Claim 12 is rejected as obvious over Fig. 1 and page 2 of this application in view of Louder et al in further view of Hershkowitz et al. This claim is patentable in view of the amendment to claim 9. Therefore, the reexamination and allowance of claim 12 is hereby requested.

12. The obligation is duly noted.

13-15. The parent application, Serial No.10/369,359 has been expressly abandoned.

16,17. Should the foregoing not be deemed to place this application in condition for allowance, a telephone call is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. P. Williams", is written over a horizontal line.

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